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ABSTRACT

This book is intended to help parents and professionals understand the communication difficulties of children and adults who do not speak, including those with autism spectrum disorders. The first four chapters describe typical characteristics of nonverbal individuals and offer examples of the authors' approach to communication and the relationship between communication and various behavioral difficulties. Chapter 5 describes several alternative and augmentative communications systems and intervention strategies including the use of sign language and various picture- or symbol-based systems. Ways to assess whether an approach is appropriate for a particular individual are also suggested. Chapter 6 presents the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), in which a child uses pictures to express his or her needs and desires without a prompt from another person. Chapter 7 details more advanced uses of the PECS system. The final chapter describes strategies using visual cues associated with learning to wait and deal with transitions, and how such strategies can enhance the effectiveness of different motivational strategies. A resource guide is appended. (Individual chapters contain references.) (DB)

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